

DOLIR REVIEW

September 2001

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Bulgarian Insurance Professionals Visit Workers' Comp

By Joann Lindemann, Office of Public Affairs

Six insurance professionals from Bulgaria visited the Division of Workers' Compensation recently as part of a training program on health insurance risk assessment and management.

The focus of the program is to provide participants with the understanding of risk in health insurance and how to adjust for risk in order to make the rate paid for care as fair as possible. The program is sponsored by World Learning – TRANSIT – Europe, which is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Richard Stickann, special projects coordinator with the Division of Workers' Compensation, hosted

the group. With the help of an interpreter, Stickann presented information on how the workers' compensation system in Missouri works to provide benefits for

Insurance gave an overview of how workers' compensation insurance premiums are determined.

Bulgaria is situated in

southeastern Europe in the Balkan Peninsula. From 1946 to 1990 Bulgaria was dominated by the Communist Party. In 1990 a multiparty system of government was adopted.

Now the country is in the process of restructuring and stabilizing its economy while building a democracy. This includes improving the quality of their healthcare services and their system of health insurance.

Reform has begun to address the state's inability to finance its highly inefficient public healthcare system.



Richard Stickann speaks through an interpreter to explain Missouri workers' compensation to visiting Bulgarian health insurance professionals.

injured workers. He also discussed what is required of employers. David Johnson of Missouri Employers Mutual

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First ESP Suggestion Implemented

By Tammy Cavender, Strategic Planner

Do you have a suggestion to improve current working processes? Well, Pat Beard, a contributions supervisor with the Division of Employment Security in St. Louis did. As a result of her suggestion, a new surplus property policy was implemented.

The department's Administration section takes surplus furniture and other office equipment to the Missouri State Surplus Property operation for eventual distribution or resale. This occurs approximately every two or three

months. Many times, other divisions within the department could use items going to surplus, but they don't know about them so they don't have the opportunity to request them. Now, thanks to Beard's suggestion, division employees can view and request equipment, furniture, etc. before it is taken to State Surplus Property.

Beard submitted the idea to the Employee Suggestion Program (ESP) to allow employees access to items before they are sent to surplus. Now, Administrative Services will issue an online memorandum listing items that will be taken to surplus, as well as information on a time and place employees can view the items they are interested in if they like. When an agency wants one of these items, it can contact the Supply Unit to arrange for its transfer.

As a result of her suggestion, Beard is eligible to receive a half day of administrative leave or a \$15 gift certificate to a local restaurant.

The ESP was implemented in July 2001. The program is designed to get useful and practical suggestions from employees to improve customer satisfaction, improve the quality of department services, increase work efficiency and reduce the cost of programs. Employees may submit a suggestion by completing MODOL-4449, Employee Suggestion Form, located on the Department Intranet under "Employee Suggestions." An explanation of how the program works can also be found in the same place on the Intranet.

Department to Sponsor Activities Highlighting Cultural Diversity

The Department's Human Relations section is sponsoring a series of activities promoting cultural diversity. Each month displays will be featured in the lobbies of the Dunklin Street and Truman Boulevard facilities. Activities will also be held each month focusing on cultural diversity.

The kickoff celebration for this series was held August 15 at the Dunklin Street building and included speeches by Department Director Catherine Leapheart and Division of Workforce Development Acting Director Rick Beasley. The kickoff also featured a balloon lift, give-away items

and refreshments.

September's celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month included a salsa-making contest.

For information on future activities, visit the *Morning News* on the Department's Intranet site, or contact Tracy Ezell at (573) 751-3928.



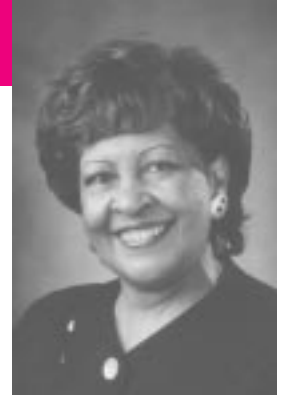
DOLIR Review is now online!

Visit DOLIR Review on the
Intranet site under
"What's News."

Quote of the Month

If you want happiness for an hour -
take a nap.
If you want happiness for a day -
go fishing.
If you want happiness for a month -
get married.
If you want happiness for a year -
inherit a fortune.
If you want happiness for a lifetime -
help others.

—Chinese Proverb



Learning from Lean Times

We have all had our share of concern lately about how state government budget withholdings will affect us as state employees, and we have all heard rumors.

The reality is that many of us will be expected to do our jobs with fewer resources. Although it may make our jobs a little more challenging, we must find ways to make sure that the level of service we provide to Missourians does not suffer. That means working harder, smarter and more efficiently.

It may mean that certain requested purchases of equipment have to wait. Travel may be cut back and overtime should be kept to a minimum when possible. Open positions might not be filled, so some of you will have to continue to do extra duty to make up for staff shortages.

My request to each of you: work with the end goal of good customer service always in mind. Work together when necessary, as a team, to get the job done. And if you have ideas about how to improve a work process, share them.

Throughout the department, we are looking for ways to work more efficiently and spread our resources farther. Lean times have brought this idea to the forefront of our thinking, but it is always necessary and should never be overlooked.

If we keep these things in mind, I am convinced that this period of lean times can only make us better at what we do.

LETTER OF RECOGNITION

August 15, 2001

Sharon Garzend-Burnett
C/o Missouri Department of Labor
Division of Employment Security
421 E. Dunklin Street
P.O. Box 59
Jefferson City, MO 65104-0059

RE: Outstanding Service

Over the past several months I have had to work closely with **Donna B. Wolf** concerning our unemployment account. Ms. Wolf has gone above and beyond in providing assistance. This included but was not limited to checking our wage validation report for errors. Ms. Wolf also provided detailed reports and explanations as to our account. In some cases we had to review the numbers several times before we agreed. This took a great deal of patience on her part. Throughout the entire process she has maintained a pleasant, supportive and professional demeanor. For this I am very grateful and feel it appropriate to recognize her contribution.

Regards,

Colette Helenkamp
Payroll Supervisor
Bryan Cave LLP

May 31, 2001

Director
Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
Division of Employment Security
PO Box 8859
St. Louis, MO 63101

Dear Director:

As I finally regain some dignity by getting back to work on Monday, June 4, I must take time to say THANK YOU for the manner in which you treated me during my claims period. At no time was I made to feel like a loser or a burden to society. The claim process was simple and the checks always arrived on time – and boy, did we look for them!

I don't know what we would have done without getting those checks on time.

On behalf of myself, my exhausted wife and disabled son, THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH!

Sincerely,

Named Omitted for Confidentiality

For Appeals Chief, Humor is a Family Affair

By Joann Lindemann, Office of Public Affairs

John “Jack” Madigan, chief of appeals, is a real professional – an attorney with years of experience and legal knowledge that he puts to work helping Missourians who are involved in disputes over unemployment insurance claims.

It sounds serious because it is.

Then there’s his daughter, Kathleen. Kathleen Madigan is arguably one of the top female comics in the country. After graduating from Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville in 1987 with a degree in journalism, she worked in St. Louis, her hometown, editing the Missouri Athletic Club’s

publication, “Cherry Diamond” and writing freelance feature stories. Almost a year later, she decided to try amateur night at a local comedy club, and turned

has been great. She has starred in an HBO comedy special and appeared on a long list of television shows, including The Tonight Show, The Late Show with David Letterman and Conan O’Brien. Madigan now headlines in comedy clubs all over the country, and won “Best Female Stand-Up Comedian” at the American Comedy Awards.

Does humor run in the family? Just spend a little time around Jack and you will know the answer. When asked where his daughter gets her sense of humor, Jack promptly replied, “Kathleen’s humor comes directly and unalterably from meself!”



From left: Kathleen Madigan, her father Jack, Jerry Seinfeld and Kathleen’s mother, Vicki.

out to be good at it.

In 1989 she quit her full-time job and began doing stand-up for a living. Since then, her success

E-mail Etiquette

Following are some simple do’s and don’ts to keep in mind when sending e-mail.

DO

- Use a subject line - a word or brief phrase to let the reader know what the e-mail is about.
- Start with a greeting, “Hi” or “Hello,” and the person’s name.
- Be brief, direct and clear. E-mails are generally more like conversations or memos... get to the point.
- Be discreet, an e-mail is easily passed on, someone you never expected to read it may see it.
- Try to limit your message to one screen, about 30 lines of text.

- Follow the same rules of good writing (spelling, grammar, punctuation).
- Mark the e-mail URGENT if it is.
- Close your message with your name.
- Check for accuracy before you send it. Once you press send, it is gone.

DON’T

- Don’t expect e-mail to be private, it is easily forwarded or misrouted.
- Don’t send an e-mail when angry or upset.
- Don’t expect an immediate response to an urgent message.

Everyone checks their e-mail at different times and some may not read theirs for days. Remember e-mail is asynchronous communication and a communication of convenience.

- Don’t use capital letters. This translates into YELLING. Capitalize as you would normally.
- Don’t share others’ e-mail addresses without checking with them first, FYI - when you forward a message it shows the original sender’s e-mail address.
- Don’t waste people’s time with trivial e-mails.

Source: Socket Communications, 2001.

Using Change to Add Value in Communities

Missourians can be proud of the changes being made for children and their families through the Caring Communities initiative. Perhaps the most visible change is the increased involvement of community residents in identifying, targeting and addressing priorities for their children and families. Every Community Partnership has involved hundreds of people in their counties through information gathering sessions, events and ongoing committees.

The Department has contributed to the Caring Communities initiative by making changes, too.

- The Department now provides communities with data on employment earnings and job retention for people living in Caring Communities neighborhoods by employee home address and zip code. In the past, this data was available only by employer zip code.
- Local Resource Teams work with Community Partnerships and Collaboratives to identify what the Department needs to do to help support the efforts of the community. They then help the community identify and link with private, local, state agency and statewide funding resources for community services.
- Caring Communities has been incorporated into the department's strategic plan. Tammy Cavender, strategic planner, participates in Safe Missouri Pilot Project, which is integrated with Caring Communities Partnerships.
- Unemployment insurance auditing staff partnered with Social Services and helped with the marketing and enrollment process for MC+ (health insurance for children).
- The Department provides liaisons for the Community Partnerships. These liaisons furnish information to communities on a wide variety of topics including wage and hour issues, child labor laws, workers' compensation and human rights.

Neet McCowen is Caring Communities Coordinator for the Department. To reach her, please call (573) 751-3817.

DUNN'S Safety Tips - CAR SEAT SAFETY

As I cross the parking lots of DOLIR and other places in Jefferson City I can't help but notice the infant car seats in the cars. I wonder how many are in compliance with the law and how many are structurally sound.

Car seats are extremely effective when installed and used correctly. They reduce the risk of death by 71 percent for infants under age one and by 54 percent for those toddlers ages one to four.

Most state laws, including Missouri's, require children under age four and less than 40 pounds to be protected by car seats. Just any car seat will not do, you must have one that fits your child.

Never place a child and car seat in the front seat of the vehicle, especially if the car is equipped with an air bag. The force of the impact of an air bag can kill or seriously injure children up to the age of 12. Beginning in 1998 all new cars are equipped with driver side air bags and front passenger air bags.

The safest place for the kids to ride is the back seat.

Infant car seats should always face backward. If you buy or borrow a used car seat, do so with caution and be sure that it meets federal motor vehicle standards. Car seats manufactured before 1981 were not required to pass a dynamic crash test and may not protect the child in a crash.

The car seat also should be compatible with your car. Register your car seat with the manufacturer, so in the event of a recall you would be on their notification list.

You may be wondering why you see people wandering through the airports with car seats. The reason is that most taxicabs and rental car agencies do not have car seats and it is still the law that the child must be protected in a car seat.

Some car seat mistakes:

- 72 percent use the locking clip the wrong way or failed to use it at all.

- 58.8 percent misused the car seat's harness-retainer chest clip or failed to use it at all.
- 45.8 percent misused the seat harness strap or failed to use it at all.
- 16.9 percent fastened the car's safety belt incorrectly or over the car seat.
- 9.6 percent turned the car seat in the wrong direction.
- 3.3 percent failed to buckle the seat's harness.

Parents, have you been guilty of any of these things? Grandma and grandpa, do you use the car seat when babysitting for the grandchildren? Think about their safety and not your convenience.

Statistics courtesy of the Kids SAFE & SOUND[™] Guide.

Steve Dunn is the Department's Safety Coordinator. He is also Director of the Mine and Cave Safety and Health Consultation Program for the Division of Labor Standards.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Susan Wekerlin



Susan Wekerlin began working for the Division of Employment Security in 1935, serving as a clerk in the Fulton local office. After

almost 25 years working for the Division in different locations she retired in 1974 as an employment counselor II.

Over the years, Wekerlin also worked in the Kansas City, Columbia, Washington, Springfield,

and Jefferson City local offices, and opened a temporary office in Boonville for a short time. She even met her husband while working in the Fulton office. He came in one day to give her a job order for his business.

For Wekerlin, working for Employment Security is kind of a "family affair." Her daughter Susan Schuster works in the Springfield Regional Claims Center. "I wouldn't be working here if my mother hadn't given me such a positive outlook on the agency (Employment Security)," says Schuster.

Today, at age 91, Wekerlin "looks

like she is in her 70's," still drives, enjoys picking blackberries, making jams and jellies, working in her garden and spending time with her Siamese cat. She traveled the world while working for daughter Susan's travel agency in Branson.

Wekerlin also plays bridge at least three times a week, often with other retirees from the Springfield local office. And she spends lots of time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

NOTE:

*Information for this edition of **Where Are They Now** was contributed by Susan Schuster, a Claims Technician II in the Springfield Regional Call Center.*

Where Are They Now? highlights DOLIR retirees and their experiences since retiring. If you would like to be featured in **Where Are They Now?**

Contact us at: **Where Are They Now?**
Office of Public Affairs • PO Box 1958 • Jefferson City, MO 65102-1958
Or e-mail: jlindeemann@dolir.state.mo.us

2001-2002 Charitable Campaign Kickoff Events Planned

"Giving is Beautiful" is the theme for the 2001-2002 Missouri State Employees' Charitable Campaign, which begins this month.

The Campaign kick-off event for the central region is scheduled for September 26 from 11:30-1:00 p.m. at both the Truman Boulevard and Dunklin Street buildings in Jefferson City. The Springfield Regional Claims Center held its kick-off September 7, the Kansas City Regional Claims Center has scheduled its event for September 27, and the St. Louis Regional Claims Center's kickoff is scheduled for September 28.

Kickoff events will include door prizes and a food drive.

Last year the department increased its contributions by \$4,931.60 with fewer employees. This year's goal is to increase donations by 10 percent.

Ida Ballew is July Employee of the Month

Ida Ballew, a Claims Technician II in the Division of Employment Security's Kansas City Regional Claims Center, is the Department's July 2001 Employee of the Month.

Co-workers say that Ballew's willingness to share her 25 years of expertise has resulted in a team that works smarter and faster, and call her one of the "best trainers in the agency." They add that she trains not only on technical information but also in people skills and interaction with co-workers.

"Each day she spends an exorbitant amount of time juggling her own work with constant interruptions from co-workers. She has shared every resource she has accumulated ...and made sure that everyone on her team is trained as leaders," said a co-worker.

→ *Lifestyles*

Retirees from August 2001

Administration

Robert Kelly, Computer Operations Supervisor II, Information Systems

Appeals

Doris Propst, Clerk IV

Division of Employment Security

Mary Dayton, Claims Technician I, Jefferson City Regional Claims Center

Otway Rash, Claims Technician II, St. Louis Regional Claims Center

-----→ *Lifestyles*

New Employees from August 2001

Administration

James Brock, Computer Information Technologist I, Information Systems

David Keisker, Computer Information Technology Specialist I,
Information Systems

Vincent Stieferman, Refrigeration Mechanic I, Facilities and Maintenance

Division of Workers' Compensation

Brian Byrd, Legal Counsel

Megan Fitzgerald, Clerk Typist II

Division of Employment Security

Judy Baslee, Claims Technician I, Kansas City Regional Claims Center

Dennis Cohen, Claims Technician I, St. Louis Regional Claims Center

Felica Griffen, Claims Technician I, St. Louis Regional Claims Center

Christopher Jenkins, Claims Technician I, St. Louis Regional Claims Center

Desheria Johnson, Claims Technician I, Kansas City Regional Claims Center

Jean Kampeter, Clerk Typist II, Contributions Field

Brenda Martin, Claims Technician I, St. Louis Regional Claims Center

Mark Osburn, Claims Technician I, Benefits

Jan Rice, Claims Technician I, St. Louis Regional Claims Center

Scott Stimson, Claims Technician I, Benefits

Pamela Ummelmann, Unemployment Insurance Auditor I, UI Programs

Anthony Williams, Claims Technician I, St. Louis Regional Claims Center

-----→ *Lifestyles*

Promotions from July 2001

Administration

Connie Basket, Research Analyst IV, Research and Analysis

Janet Farley, Computer Information Technologist III, Information Systems

Becky Voss, Graphics Supervisor, Administrative Services

Division of Employment Security

Carol Bilyeu, Contributions Deputy, Employer Contributions

Laverne Boyd, Claims Technician I, St. Louis Regional Claims Center

Janella Preston, Contributions Deputy, Employer Contributions

Ruth Riechard, Unemployment Insurance Auditor I, Contributions Field

Reflections

Mary Dayton retired August 31, 2001 after more than 28 years of service to the Department. Dayton worked as a Claims Technician I for the Division of Employment Security's Jefferson City Regional Claims Center.

"Even though I've been with DOLIR only a short time, the fond memories from sharing my working days with you will last a long time," says Dayton. She adds that she experienced an exceptional level of comradeship working at the Department that she feels exemplifies the outstanding qualities of her co-workers. "I am grateful for having been a part of this rewarding experience."



Doris Propst

Doris Propst retired August 31, 2001 after more than 31 years with the Department. Propst worked as a Clerk IV in the Appeals Section in Jefferson City.

According to Propst, her fondest memories are of all the people in the Appeals section where she worked for 26 years. "They are wonderful friends and great co-workers. All the people at the Division (Employment Security) are wonderful people, and I will miss everyone dearly."

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